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ABSTRACT

Increasing demands for educational accountability make it important for principals to know how and when to successfully use methods of supervision with teachers to attain the mutual goal of instructional improvement. To determine whether significant differences existed between junior high school teachers' perceptions of principals' supervisory behavior and the teachers' preferences for principals' supervisory methods, Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaires (form 1) were mailed to 4 teachers employed in each of 20 randomly selected public junior high schools in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Per state, 80 usable responses would have signified a 100 percent return; the actual response rate was 91 percent from Mississippi; Alabama, 25 percent; Arkansas, 30 percent; Kentucky, 20 percent; Louisiana, 40 percent; and Tennessee, 20 percent. An analysis of collected data showed that, in the areas of Curriculum and Staff Development and Evaluation of Instruction, the teachers perceived more directive supervision. Mississippi teachers perceived and preferred less supervision than did teachers in the other five states who perceived more nondirective supervision than they preferred. Racial demographic variables indicated that Caucasians perceived more supervision in Curriculum Development, Instructional Organization, and Staff Development than did non-Caucasians. (16 references) (KM)

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The Relationship Between Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Actual Supervisory Behavior and Teachers' Preferred Supervisory Behavior in Selected Southern Public Junior High Schools

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The Relationship Between Teachers' Perceptions of Principals' Actual Supervisory Behavior and Teachers' Preferred Supervisory Behavior in Selected Southern Public Junior High Schools

Introduction

According to Wiles and Lovell (1975) principals are considered the supervisor of instruction for their building. The majority of their time should be spent in the improvement of instruction (Nickerson, 1972). Increasing demands for accountability make it important for principals to know how and when to successfully use methods of supervision with teachers to attain the mutual goal of improving instruction. In order to encourage and maintain high quality programs under stressful conditions, principals should develop an awareness of their faculty members' perceptions of their supervisory behaviors.

The three types of supervisory behaviors most often observed by teachers are: directive, collaborative, and nondirective. Pfeiffer and Dunlap (1982) asserted that these behaviors should be used in combinations as befits the situation at hand. It was Glickman's (1980) contention that principals would better serve their staff by responding to individual needs through use of varying approaches such as these.

Sergiovanni and Starratt (1979), equating supervision with leadership in that both involve change, asserted that there exists no one approach to leadership that is applicable to all situations, but rather that the effectiveness of an approach depended upon its suitability to the situation at hand. In support of this theory, Sergiovanni and Starratt relied upon McGregor's Theory X and Y. The authors suggested that when faced with Theory X type teachers who, according to the theory, are basically passive and lazy, the supervisor must act in a directive mode in order to achieve the school's goals. On the other hand, Theory Y type teachers,

those who are self-motivated, would require a non-directive approach to supervision from that same principal.

Fiedler (1967) reflecting basically the same idea held that leaders behaved in more than one mode. The directive mode or approach required one's taking primary responsibility for the group, controlling, managing, and being task-oriented in interaction with coworkers. Acting in the collaborative mode, one would share decision-making and leadership with members of the group. Acting in the nondirective mode, one would act in a permissive manner and be considerate of the group members' feelings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between public junior high school teachers' perceptions of principals' actual and teachers' preferred supervisory behaviors as measured by the Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire, Form 1. The study concerned responses from teachers in the public junior high schools of the following states: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

Statement of the Problem

The problem was to determine if there were significant differences among the 6 states' public junior high school teachers' perceptions of principals' actual supervisory behavior and teachers' preferences for principals' supervisory behavior.

As a means of structuring the problem, answers were sought to the following questions:

1. Were there significant differences in teachers' perceptions of principals' actual supervisory behaviors and teachers' preferences for principals' supervisory behaviors as measured by the SBDQ, Form 1 subscale scores of: Curriculum Development, Instructional Organization, Staff Development, and Evaluation of Instruction, or on the Directive, Collaborative, or

Nondirective dimensions of these subscale scores?

2. Were there significant differences in teacher' perceptions of principals' actual supervisory behaviors and teachers' preferences for principals' supervisory behaviors when the variables of state of employment, subject area, gender, and race were considered as measured by the SBDQ, Form 1 subscale scores of Curriculum Development, Instructional Organization, Staff Development, and Evaluation of Instruction and the dimensional scores within each of these subscales?

Within this study, state of employment represents two sets of teachers. One set of teachers was within the state of Mississippi. The other set of teachers was derived from five southern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisana, and Tennessee.

To analyze the data of question one, one way analysis of variance was used. Factorial analysis of variance was used to answer question two of the study.

Procedure

The population of this study consisted of all teachers currently employed in the public junior high schools of the following six states: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, Mississippi. and Tennessee. Twenty schools were randomly selected from each of the six state's Educational Directory through use of a table of random numbers. Thus, a total of 120 schools was selected for the study. Four teachers per school or 80 teachers per state would have totaled 100 percent return for this study.

Superintendents of the schools selected were sent a letter of introduction from the head of the Department of Educational Leadership, a letter of explanation of the study from the researcher, and a form by which permission was granted or denied to conduct the study. After ten days, if no response was received from a superintendent, a reminder letter was sent. If no response was received within eight days of this reminder, a phone call was placed to the superintendent.

The original mail-out to superintendents was sent January 11, 1988. An inflex of negative responses led to the eventual decision to pool the results from the

five states of Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, and Tennessee and to correlate these results with those received from Mississippi.

Receipt of approval from superintendents signaled mail-outs of introductory letters and packets to principals. The principal of each of the schools contacted was sent a letter of introduction and explanation of the study. Each was informed of the permission granted by the superintendent. Each principal was asked to designate a contact person who in turn selected four teachers in the school, one from each of the areas of science, math, social studies, and language arts, to take part in the study.

Principals were next sent the complete packet of information for the study. In the packet were four SBDQ, Form 1 questionnaires, four answer sheets, four envelopes (one for each teacher's response), and one large, self-addressed and stamped envelope. The individual designated by the principal was responsible for disseminating and collecting these forms and mailing them back to the researcher.

A return rate of 60 percent was anticipated for this study. A return rate of about 40 percent was actualized. Eighty usable returns per state were needed to achieve a 100% return rate. Results are based on these numbers. By state, the usable returns were as follows: Alabama with 21 returns or 25%, Arkansas with 24 returns or 30%, Kentucky returned 16 forms for 20%, Louisiana returned 32 forms for 40%, Mississippi returned 73 forms for 91%, and Tennessee returned 16 forms for 20% of the desired 80 forms per state. The total return rate for the study was 91% from Mississippi or 73 of 80 possible returned usable forms and 28% from other southern states of 110 of 400 possible returned usable forms. Figure 1 depicts these results.

Through use of the Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire, Form 1, (SBDQ), this study investigated the relationship between teachers' preceptions of principals' actual supervisory behaviors and teachers' preferences for

supervisory behaviors in selected Southern public junior high schools. Four of the instruments eight subscales were used in this study. The subscales used were Curriculum Development, Instructional Organization, Staff Development, and Evaluation of Instruction. Mean scores were computed for the Subscale scores and for the three dimensional scores within each subscale: Directive, Collaborative, and Nondirective supervision. Also considered were the demographics of state of employment, subject area, gender, and race.

Results

Analysis of the data collected revealed a number of significant differences in answer to question one. These data are presented by subscale title.

In the areas of Curriculum Development, Staff Development, and Evaluation of Instruction, teachers perceived themselves as receiving more Directive ~~Collabo-ration~~ supervision. Similar results were found in studies by Hanes (1962), Lieberman (1970), Ngugi(1976), Balok (1981), Kaufman (1981), Blackbourn (1983), and Vivian (1983).

Conflicting results were noted in studies by Sistrunk (1982) and Richardson (1988). Results of Sistrunk's study indicated a positive correlation between nondirective supervision and teacher satisfaciton. Results of Richardson's study indicated as Collaborative supervision increased, so, too, did teacher burn-out. Tables 1 through 4 depict the findings of this present study.

Analysis of the data concerning question two of this study revealed a number of significant differences. The demographic variable of Subject Area yielded no significant differences, thus will not be discussed here. Of the demographic variables yielding significant results, State of Employment was first.

Examination of the date for the subscale of Curriculum Development revealed four significant differences. Teachers in other Southern states both perceived and preferred more supervision than did Mississippi teachers. These teachers

perceived themselves as receiving more Nondirective supervision than they preferred. Mississippi's teachers preferred to receive more Directive supervision in Curriculum Development than did teachers in other Southern states. Results are shown in Table 5.

In the area of Instructional Organization when the variables of state of employment was considered, teachers in other southern states perceived themselves as receiving more supervision than did Mississippi's teachers. Teachers in Mississippi perceived themselves as receiving more Collaborative and less Nondirective supervision than did teachers in other southern states. Table 6 depicts these results.

In regard to Staff Development, teachers in other southern states perceived and preferred more supervision. Their perception was of receiving more Nondirective supervision than they preferred. Mississippi's teachers both perceived and preferred more Directive supervision during Staff Development. Results are shown in Table 7.

In regard to Evaluation of Instruction, teachers in other southern states perceived and preferred more supervision. They perceived themselves as receiving more Nondirective supervision than they preferred. Mississippi's teachers showed a preference for more Directive supervision in the Evaluation of Instruction. Ngugi's (1976) study found the same to be true in Mississippi. Results are depicted in Table 8.

Part three of question two considered the demographic variable of gender. Female teachers perceived themselves as receiving more supervision than did males in the area of Curriculum Development. Sistrunk's (1982) study produced a similar result. These results are shown on Table 9.

Part four of question two considered the demographic variable of race. Perceptions of Caucasians were of receiving more supervision in the areas of Curriculum Development, Instructional Organization, and Staff Development than did Noncaucasians. Further, Caucasians preferred to receive more supervision

in the areas of Curriculum Development and Evaluation of Instruction. In the area of Evaluation of Instruction, Caucasians preferred to receive more Collaborative supervision than did Noncaucasians. Results of Ngugi's (1976) study basically support this finding. Sistrunk's (1982) study noted, too, that Noncaucasian teachers indicated more job satisfaction when they perceived more Collaborative supervision. Tables 10 through 13 depict these findings.

Discussion

Results of question one support that teachers in the six southern states of this study prefer collaboration, whereas they are receiving either directive or nondirective supervision. The results of question two indicate that teachers in the five southern states other than Mississippi are receiving more Nondirective supervision than they prefer. This result supports the trend toward empowerment of teachers, but, of course, no conclusive evidence of this fact is provided by this survey. This same conclusion does not appear to hold true for teachers within the state of Mississippi. These teachers reported receiving some but preferring to receive more directive supervision.

A principal's effectiveness is to be found in the supervisory pattern employed. Alfonso, Firth, and Neville (1981) found that an authoritarian or directive behavior was effective when the principal was perceived by teachers as highly accurate and competent. A further result of their study was that collaborative behavior produced more originality, higher motivation, and more group mindedness than did directive or nondirective behavior.

A more current study by Glickman (1987) indicated that in regard to instructional improvement, the principal tends to be more of a source of encouragement and support, basically nondirective, having given much of the task expectancies to assistant principals and/or department heads or lead teachers. Principals need to become aware of results of studies of this nature

in order to understand and know when best to use a particular supervisory behavior to gain cooperation from all concerned to achieve common goals of the school.

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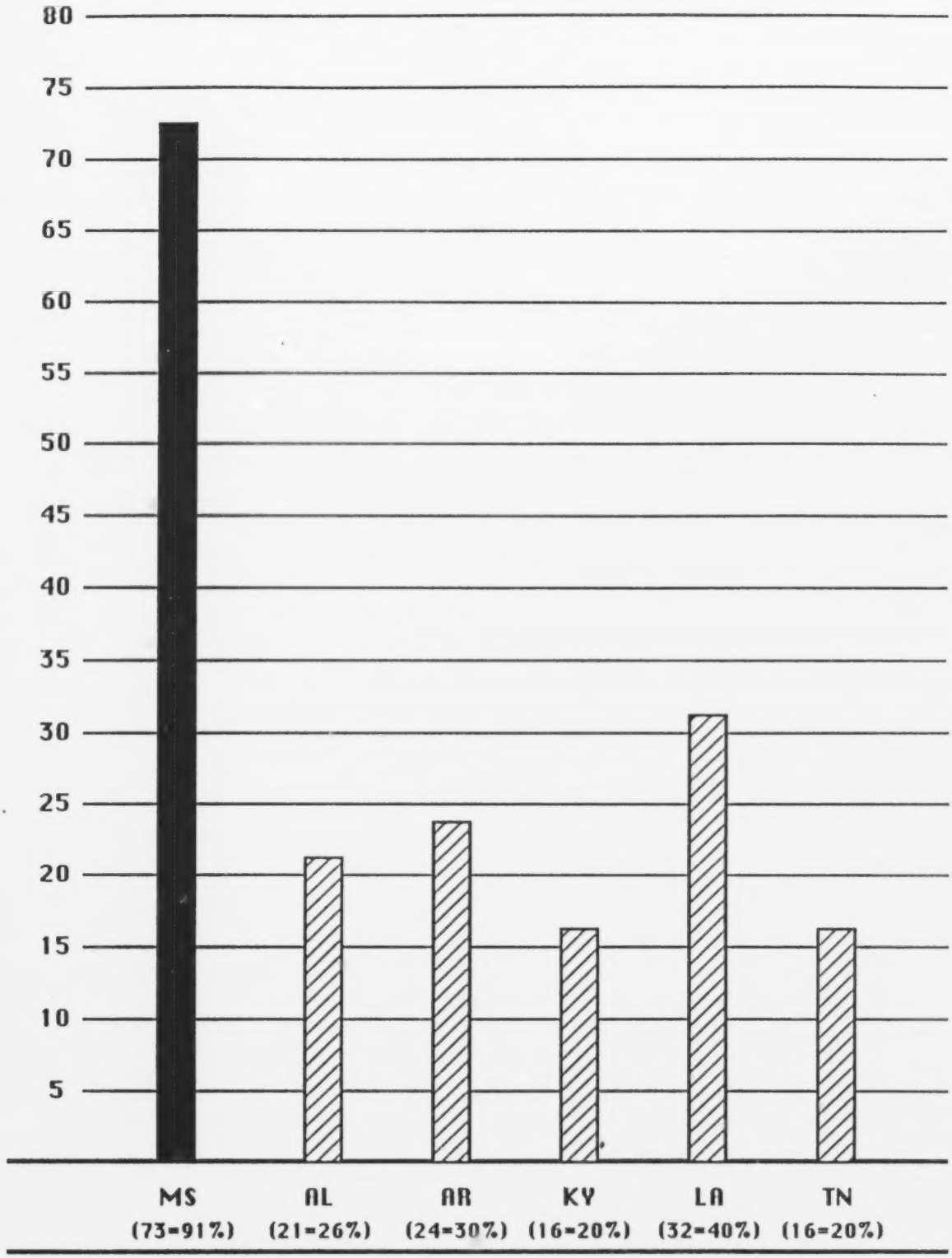
Figure 1: Number of Usable Returns* Reported by State



*Number based on 80 returns per state = 100% per state

Table 1.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Curriculum Development

	Actual (N=103)		Preferred N=103		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Subscale Score	10.41	1.91	10.38	1.54	.02
Directive	.87	1.03	.44	.87	18.32*
Collaborative	2.85	1.51	3.73	1.28	36.37*
Nondirective	1.28	1.37	.83	1.12	12.04*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,365)

Table 2.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Supervisory Behavior in the Area of Instructional Organization

	Actual (N=103)		Preferred N=103		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	9.39	1.90	10.30	1.73	22.77*
Directive	1.78	1.23	.79	1.04	69.80*
Collaborative	2.05	1.36	3.13	1.34	58.77*
Nondirective	1.17	1.11	1.08	1.14	.55*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,365)

Table 3.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Staff Development

	Actual (N=103)		Preferred N=103		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	20.56	3.46	20.48	3.17	.05
Directive	4.17	2.38	3.07	2.47	18.96*
Collaborative	4.10	2.70	6.39	2.77	63.64*
Nondirective	2.73	1.99	1.55	1.66	37.86*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,365)

Table 4.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Evaluation of Instruction

	Actual (N=103)		Preferred N=103		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	14.05	3.13	15.20	2.38	15.55*
Directive	3.28	2.29	1.63	2.01	53.28*
Collaborative	3.39	2.42	5.53	2.22	77.93*
Nondirective	1.33	1.60	.84	1.13	11.77*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,365)

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Table 5.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Curriculum Development When The Variable of State of Employment was Considered

Actual

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	10.07	1.84	10.64	1.93	3.95*
Directive	.92	1.04	.84	1.04	.27
Collaborative	3.10	1.54	2.69	1.47	3.21
Nondirective	.99	1.34	1.47	1.37	5.65*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Preferred

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	10.03	1.56	10.62	1.48	6.67*
Directive	.62	1.10	.33	.65	4.98*
Collaborative	3.74	1.31	3.73	1.26	.00
Nondirective	.64	.93	.95	1.21	3.25

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 6.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the area of Instructional Organization

Actual

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	8.92	1.89	9.70	1.86	7.68*
Directive	1.89	1.30	1.71	1.18	.95
Collaborative	2.30	1.43	1.88	1.30	4.23*
Nondirective	.80	1.06	1.41	1.08	13.79*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Preferred

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	10.00	1.79	10.49	1.67	3.59
Directive	.93	1.09	.70	.99	2.37
Collaborative	3.14	1.38	3.13	1.31	.00
Nondirective	.93	1.16	1.18	1.12	2.12

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 7.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the area of Staff Development

Actual

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	19.56	3.50	21.22	3.29	10.59*
Directive	4.67	2.63	3.84	2.15	5.53*
Collaborative	4.10	2.88	4.11	2.60	.00
Nondirective	2.23	1.83	3.05	2.04	7.72*

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Preferred

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	19.84	3.63	20.91	2.75	5.16*
Directive	3.62	2.95	2.70	2.03	6.22*
Collaborative	5.93	3.07	6.69	2.52	3.33
Nondirective	1.45	1.62	1.61	1.69	.39

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 8.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the area of Evaluation of Instruction

Actual

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	13.41	2.85	14.48	2.85	5.24*
Directive	3.63	2.43	3.05	2.18	2.88
Collaborative	3.33	2.36	3.43	2.46	.07
Nondirective	1.04	1.67	1.53	1.54	4.10

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Preferred

	MS (N=73)		Other Southern States (N=110)		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Score	14.63	2.81	15.58	1.97	7.24*
Directive	2.08	2.33	1.34	1.71	6.22*
Collaborative	5.21	2.46	5.75	2.03	2.62
Nondirective	.71	1.24	.92	1.05	1.47

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 9.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals'Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Curriculum Development' When the Variable of Gender was Considered

	Actual (N=183)			Preferred N=183		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Scores						
Male (N=47)	9.89	1.59		10.15	1.33	
Female (N=136)	10.59	1.98	4.72*	10.46	1.60	1.46
Directive						
Male (N=47)	.94	.94		.43	.93	
Female (N=136)	.85	1.06		.45	.85	.25
Collaborative						
Male (N=47)	3.23	1.13		4.00	1.06	
Female (N=136)	2.72	1.60		3.64	1.33	.21
Nondirective						
Male (N=47)	.83	1.01		.57	.77	
Female (N=136)	1.43	1.44		.91	1.20	.81

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 10.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Curriculum Development When the Variable of Race was Considered

	Actual (N=183)			Preferred N=183		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Scores						
Caucasian (N=145)	10.57	1.93		10.55	1.48	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	9.82	1.72	4.45*	9.74	1.62	8.80*
Directive						
Caucasian (N=145)	.84	1.03		.34	.74	
Noncaucasian (N=38	.97	1.05		.84	1.17	2.32
Collaborative						
Caucasian (N=145)	2.75	1.52		3.77	1.26	
Noncaucasian (N=38	3.24	1.40		3.50	1.35	3.50
Nondirective						
Caucasian (N=145)	1.41	1.40		.89	1.16	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	.79	1.67		.58	.91	.92

$F \geq 3.83$ *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 11.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Instructional Organization When the Variable of Race was Considered

	Actual (N=183)			Preferred N=183		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Scores						
Caucasian (N=145)	9.56	1.95		10.44	1.72	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	8.74	1.55	5.76*	9.75	1.66	5.11*
Directive						
Caucasian (N=145)	1.76	1.25		.72	1.02	
Noncaucasian (N=38	1.87	1.17		1.03	1.00	.43
Collaborative						
Caucasian (N=145)	1.92	1.36		3.11	1.34	
Noncaucasian (N=38	2.53	1.29		3.21	1.34	2.10
Nondirective						
Caucasian (N=145)	1.32	1.12		1.17	1.15	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	.61	.82		.76	1.05	1.18

F > 3.83 *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 12.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Staff Development When the Variable of Race was Considered

	Actual (N=183)			Preferred N=183		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Scores						
Caucasian (N=145)	20.91	3.28		20.70	3.00	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	19.21	3.82	7.53*	19.63	3.63	3.50
Directive						
Caucasian (N=145)	3.95	2.23		2.80	2.24	
Noncaucasian (N=38	5.00	2.75		4.08	3.01	.14
Collaborative						
Caucasian (N=145)	4.19	2.67		6.70	2.63	
Noncaucasian (N=38	3.79	2.85		5.21	2.99	2.43
Nondirective						
Caucasian (N=145)	2.86	1.99		1.50	1.72	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	2.21	1.95		1.71	1.41	3.32

F ≥ 3.83 *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)

Table 13.--Teachers' Perceptions of Actual and Preferred Principals' Supervisory Behaviors in the Area of Evaluation of Instruction When the Variable of Race was Considered

	Actual (N=183)			Preferred N=183		
	$\bar{X}$	SD	F	$\bar{X}$	SD	F
Total Scores						
Caucasian (N=145)	14.24	3.14		15.40	2.26	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	13.37	3.07	2.32	14.45	2.69	4.92*
Directive						
Caucasian (N=145)	3.21	2.32		1.41	1.90	
Noncaucasian (N=38	3.53	2.18		2.47	2.21	1.84
Collaborative						
Caucasian (N=145)	3.34	2.50		5.77	2.13	
Noncaucasian (N=38	3.58	2.09		4.61	2.34	5.63*
Nondirective						
Caucasian (N=145)	1.45	1.62		.81	1.10	
Noncaucasian (N=38)	.89	1.47		.92	1.22	3.45

F ≥ 3.83 *Significant at the .05 level (df = 1,182)